A CULTURE OF ACCEPTANCE

By: Angelyn R. Ceribo

“**Ganyan talaga sa Pilipinas**.”

Few phrases have inflicted as much harm on this nation as these five words. Casual, almost joking, yet insidiously damaging—they carry a message that has been internalized by generations: corruption is normal, inevitable, and untouchable. This mindset is more than a simple expression of frustration—it is a dangerous form of resignation that teaches citizens to accept what should never be accepted.

When corruption becomes normal, accountability becomes optional. Standards of leadership, ethics, and governance slowly erode. Citizens begin to expect less from their officials, tolerate substandard public services, and assume that theft, bribery, and abuse of power are unavoidable facts of life. It is no wonder that while billions are siphoned from public coffers, families go hungry, children sit in overcrowded classrooms, and communities lack basic infrastructure. The people who are supposed to protect and serve have become predators, and we have been conditioned to look the other way.

Every laugh at a corruption joke, every scroll past a news headline about a scandal, every shrug at a government failure—these are not harmless acts. They are small approvals, tiny nods that reinforce the system of abuse. Corrupt officials do not fear laws—they fear a vigilant, outraged, and demanding public. When citizens accept corruption as inevitable, we gift those in power with impunity. Silence, apathy, and indifference become the armor that protects wrongdoing.

This culture of acceptance does not merely allow corruption to continue—it ensures its survival across generations. Young Filipinos grow up seeing dishonesty as the path to success, deceit as a tool for advancement, and moral compromise as a necessity for survival. Each cycle of corruption begins with the belief that challenging injustice is futile. And so, the pattern repeats itself: one administration ends, another begins, yet the corruption persists, fed by a society that has been trained to tolerate it.

But change is possible. Breaking this cycle requires more than temporary outrage or fleeting anger—it requires **persistent vigilance, collective action, and a refusal to accept what is morally wrong**. It begins with everyday choices: refusing to participate in bribery, questioning unjust practices, holding leaders accountable, and demanding transparency in

governance. Each act of integrity, no matter how small, weakens the power of corruption.

The Philippines cannot hope for a future defined by honesty and progress if this culture of acceptance remains unchallenged. To reclaim our nation, we must teach future generations to reject indifference, to speak truth boldly, and to fight injustice relentlessly. Corruption thrives not only because of the greed of the few—it survives because too many allow it to continue. And until we change that, our country’s potential will remain shackled.